

## YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY!

Natural areas present hazards. Rocks roll, trees topple, and limbs drop without warning. Wild animals, uneven ground, and changing weather can pose dangers. People may create other hazards through campfires, traffic, snowplay, and poor decisions.

Water is the main cause of death here. Many drowning victims were walking or climbing near rivers and unexpectedly fell in.

The Park Service works to reduce risks, but your safety is in your hands. Keep alert. Read warnings and ask a ranger for advice.



**DROWNING** is the #1 cause of death in national parks! Be extra careful along rivers and streams; falling in is as dangerous as swimming. Once in a river, getting out can be nearly impossible. Rocks are smooth and slippery; swift, cold water rapidly saps your strength.

**TICKS:** Common in foothill grasses; check yourself after a walk. Their bite is painless, but a small percentage carry Lyme disease. Remove them carefully with tweezers; seek a ranger's and/or doctor's advice.



**PLAGUE:** Please do not feed or touch ANY park animals. Fleas on rodents can carry plague. Deer mice feces can carry hantavirus.

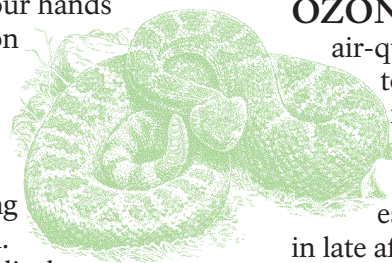
**WEST NILE VIRUS** is caused by bites from infected mosquitos. The chance of infection is low and human illness is unusual, but avoid mosquito bites.

**HYPOTHERMIA:** This life-threatening condition can occur year-round. Stay dry and snack often. If others don't respond to the need for warmer clothes or are stumbling, forgetful, or extremely tired and drowsy, get warm sugary drinks into them immediately. Get them into dry clothing, sleeping bags, and shelter.

**LIGHTNING:** If you see dark clouds or lightning or hear thunder, get inside a large building or a vehicle (not convertible), if possible. Do not stand under trees or in shallow caves. Avoid projecting above the surrounding landscape such as standing on a ridge, on Moro Rock, or in open meadows. Stay away from open water, wire fences, and metal railings, which can carry lightning from a distance.



**RATTLESNAKES:** Watch where you put your hands and feet! Common in the foothills, rattlesnakes are protected in parks. Most bites result from teasing or handling them. Very few people die, but tissue damage can be severe. If bitten, avoid panic; call a ranger or 911.



**COUGARS** roam the parks, but chances of seeing one are very small. Mountain lions rarely attack people and pets, but be aware. Avoid hiking alone. Watch children closely; never let them run ahead. If you see a cougar, the goal is to convince it that you are not prey and may be dangerous to it:

- Don't run. Cougars associate running with prey and give chase.
- Try to appear as large as possible. Don't crouch or try to hide.
- Hold your ground or back away slowly while facing the lion.
- Pick up children.
- If the lion acts aggressively, wave your hands, shout, and throw stones or sticks at it.
- If attacked, fight back!
- Report any cougar sightings.

### CARBON MONOXIDE:

This odorless, colorless gas can be fatal. Never burn charcoal in enclosed spaces such as a tent, camper, or RV.

**POISON OAK:** This common shrub grows in the foothills up to 5000 feet elevation. Red in fall with whitish berries, bare in winter, in spring its shiny green leaves grow in groups of three. If you touch any part of the plant,

wash skin and clothes right away.

**OZONE POLLUTION:** See air-quality index forecasts in visitor centers. Most ozone rises into the Sierra on warm afternoon winds. Levels of this colorless gas are highest May to October, peaking in late afternoon. These peaks sometimes reach "unhealthy" state and federal standards and can affect respiratory systems. Ozone forms in sunlight from gases in car and factory exhaust. This statewide problem challenges us all to reduce pollution.

### OPERATION NO-GROW

- Prevent illegal marijuana growing.
  - Protect visitor & employee safety.
  - Preserve your natural resources.
- Keep your parks safe and free from illegal activities! Report suspicious activities to 1-888-NPS-CRIME.

**UNSAFE WATER:** Giardia, a protozoan in lakes and streams, can cause intestinal distress. Iodine and other chemicals may not be as reliable as heat in killing bacteria or Giardia, but can be effective if used properly. Boil drinking water at least 3 minutes.

### SAFE DRINKING WATER:

Each of the parks' 13 water systems is tested regularly to ensure that it meets state and federal standards. Annual Consumer Confidence Reports are available at visitor centers, or call 559-565-3341.

**EXPLORE SAFELY:** Avoid going alone. Tell someone your plans and return time. Beware of uneven or slippery surfaces. Wear sunglasses and sunscreen. Give right of way to wildlife.

## Rules of the road

### TRAFFIC DELAYS - SEQUOIA

Slow for construction along the Generals Highway just north of the Giant Forest Museum. Watch for signs to new parking area for the Sherman Tree; see the front page for details.

### ROAD CONDITIONS

Watch for ice and snowplows. 24-hour recording: 1-559-565-3341 then press 9, then 4.

### DON'T LOSE YOUR BRAKES

Always downshift when going downhill. In automatic vehicles, put the gearshift on 1, 2 or L. The engine gets louder as it slows you down, but it will save your brakes.

### LET OTHERS PASS

Slower vehicles must use paved turnouts to let traffic pass.

### STAY ON PAVEMENT

Park & travel on pavement only.

### FINDING GASOLINE

No gas stations within park boundaries. Only Grant Grove market sells cans of emergency gas. Fill up in Three Rivers, Clingan's Junction or in the National Forest at:

- Stony Creek Lodge 1-559-565-3909: through 11/8, 7am-7pm weekdays & 7am-8pm weekends or 24 hours with credit card. South of Grant Grove on the Generals Hwy.
- Hume Lake Christian Camp 559-335-2000: Weekdays & Sunday 8am-10:30pm, Saturday 7am-7pm; 24 hours with credit card. 11 miles (18 km) north of Grant Grove via Hwy 180.
- Kings Canyon Lodge 1-559-335-2405: usually 9am-dark. 17 miles (27 km) north from Grant Grove on Hwy 180.

### MOTORCYCLES

Avoid oil buildup in uphill lanes. **NARROW, WINDING ROADS IN KINGS CANYON & NATIONAL FOREST/ SEQUOIA MONUMENT –**

- Panoramic Point Road:

Closes with first snow. No trailers or motorhomes.

- Redwood Mountain Road:

Unpaved, rough. Not plowed.

- Big Meadows, Quail Flat/Ten Mile, Converse Basin (FS): All or partially unpaved.

### IN SEQUOIA –

- Crystal Cave Road: Maximum vehicle length 22' (6.7m). No trailers. Closes late October.

- Mineral King Road: Steep. RVs & trailers strongly discouraged (not permitted in campgrounds). Closes 11/1.

- Moro Rock/Crescent Meadow Road: RVs & trailers not recommended. Limited parking. Closes with first snow.

- South Fork Road: Partially unpaved. Slippery when wet.
- Road to Middle Fork Trail:

Unpaved. Slippery when wet.

### LENGTH ADVISORY

On 12 narrow miles from Potwisha Campground to Giant Forest Museum in Sequoia Park, advised maximum is 22 feet (6.7m). Maximum length limit on the Generals Highway is 40 feet (12 m) for single vehicles, 50 feet (15 m) for vehicles plus a towed unit. Alternatives: Hwy 180 from Fresno is straighter, less steep, & wider. If you are towing a car, camp in the foothills & use the car to explore.

### EMERGENCY CAR REPAIRS

For a tow: 565-3341 then press zero (24 hours). In Sequoia Park only, AAA is available for out-of-gas, lock outs, jump starts, minor repairs: call 565-4070 (24 hours).

### BICYCLES

Ride only on roads (not trails), single file with traffic, and wear light colors after dark. People under 18 must wear a helmet.